





LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

A

LETTER

TO THE

REV. LORD CHARLES THYNNE,

In Answer

TO HIS

“LETTER TO HIS LATE PARISHIONERS.”

BY CATHOLICUS.

LONDON:

FRANCIS & JOHN RIVINGTON,
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

1853.

A

LETTER,

§c.

MY LORD,

Your Letter to your late parishioners having been printed and circulated in my neighbourhood, I need not offer any apology for attempting to reply to it. I do so under the full persuasion that you have taken a very awful step without due consideration ; and, I must add, without intending to give you any offence, with very imperfect knowledge of the doctrines of the Church which you have left, and still greater ignorance of the doctrines of the Church which you have adopted. I shall take your objections *seriatim* ; and first, that which respects confession and absolution. Your Lordship seems to be totally unaware of the great distinction between ministerial, or, in other words, that which is declaratory or imprecatory, and judicial absolution. As a minister of the Church of England for fifteen years, you have, of course, constantly read the Absolution in the Order for Morning Prayer, and the still

B

more solemn one in the Communion office, whereby, in virtue of the Divine commission to the priest, "God's most gracious and merciful pardon is ascertained" to all penitent sinners, a condition always expressed or implied; but where really existing, we believe the absolution is ratified in heaven¹. And yet you say, that "ever since the Reformation successive generations have passed away unabsolved." You affirm that "the peace of the soul is dependent on the sacrament of penance, without which no absolution would avail to afford comfort; and that so long as the Church of England shall remain, future generations shall pass away in the same un comforted, un hopeful state." You would have acted with more justice to your late parishioners and to yourself if you had examined more closely into a subject on which you conceive your own peace, and the peace of those to whom you ministered, so much to depend. You would have found that for twelve hundred years the whole Christian world was without that peace, which, you say, depends on an enforced penance. But before I enter upon the consideration of this subject, I must advert to an expression which you make use of, to show with what extreme carelessness you have not only thought, but written. You say, "That blessed FOUNTAIN for the *remission of sins* has been closed against

¹ Tunc enim vera est absolutio Præsidentis, cum interni arbitrium sequitur iudicis.—Greg. Magni Op., Homily 26, t. i. p. 1555.

the people of England for three hundred years." Surely you do not mean to affirm, even as a Romanist, that the so-called sacrament of penance is the FOUNTAIN for *the remission of sins*. There was "a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness," and that fountain is the blood of Christ Himself. "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins²." Supposing the sacrament of penance to be as true as it is false, the most you could have said of it was, that it was a *sacramental application* of the grace which flowed *from* the fountain for the remission of sins, which was Christ's death. THAT is the FOUNTAIN of all remission. To call penance the *fountain* is little, if any thing, short of blasphemy. You cannot intend to say what you have written. But further, if in the Church of England for three hundred years successive generations have passed away unabsolved, that is, in your sense of the word unabsolved, all the generations of Christians for twelve hundred years were devoid of the same peace which you felt to be necessary to you. Auricular confession was not imposed until the fourth Council of Lateran, then it was enforced by the twenty-first decree, but only once a year; but then the *sacrament* of penance was not affirmed, nor even named; nor was auricular confession then imposed under such an anathema as in the Council of Trent. You have (I am sure unintentionally) stated the very reverse of what is true. The compulsory penance and ab-

² Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14.

solution imposed by Rome was actually imposed since the Reformation. It was in the fourteenth session of the Council of Trent, 1561, that auricular confession and absolution, and submission to the sacrament of penance were made compulsory under pain of an anathema. Hitherto such a damning sentence had not been pronounced; nor had it been pronounced that any one who denied priestly absolution to be judicial was to be anathematized. The Council of Lateran, to which the Council of Trent refers, has no such sentence. I annex the decrees of both Councils^{3 4}.

The Eighth Canon of the Council of Trent affords strong internal evidence that they had no

³ Omnis utriusque sexus fidelis postquam ad annos discretionis pervenerit, omnia sua solus peccata confiteatur fideliter saltem semel in anno, proprio sacerdotis, et injunctam sibi pœnitentiam studeat pro viribus adimplere, suscipiens reverenter ad minus in Pascha Eucharistiæ sacramentum: nisi forte de consilio proprii sacerdotis ob aliquam rationabilem causam ad tempus ab ejus perceptione duxerit abstinendum; alioquin et vivens ab egressu ecclesiæ arceatur et moriens Christianâ careat sepulturâ.

—4 Conc. Lateran, A.D. 1215. Studii Phil. Labbæi et Geb. Cassart. Venetiis, 1730, t. 13, pp. 995, 996.

⁴ Si quis dixerit, absolutionem sacramentalem sacerdotis non esse actum judiciale, sed nudum ministerium pronunciandi, et declarandi remissa esse peccata confitenti; modo tantum credat se esse absolutum: aut sacerdos non serio, sed joco absolvat, aut dixerit non requiri confessionem pœnitentis ut sacerdos ipsum absolvere possit; anathema sit.—Concil. Trident. Sess. 14. Canon 9, “De Pœnitentiæ Sacramento.” The title of the Lateran decree is merely “De Confessione faciendâ, et non revelanda à sacerdote et saltem in Pascha communicando.”

higher antiquity than the year 1215 for this injunction. For it refers to the Council of Lateran, in which auricular confession was first *enjoined*. But further, in the opuscula of Thomas Aquinas, he tells us that a doctor said to him that the optative form, or deprecatory, was the usual, and that it was not thirty years since the indicative form of “Ego te absolvo” was used. St. Thomas Aquinas was born A.D. 1224, and died 1274. It must have been therefore in the 13th century, according to Aquinas, that the judicial form of absolution *began* to be used. But then, a very important question arises, one, in fact, on which the whole force of judicial absolution rests. It is this: From *what* did the judicial form release the penitent? Was it from sins committed against God, or from a penal sentence imposed by the Church? Now, had you read the concurrent testimony of all the Fathers in the purest ages of the Church, you would have found ample proof that to God alone was reserved the power of *forgiving* sins; that what the priest did, he did only ministerially. Hear St. Ambrose: “Men give their ministry in the remission of sins, but they exercise not the right of any power, neither are sins remitted by them in their own, but in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; men *pray*, but it is God who forgives; it is man’s obsequiousness, but the bountiful gift is from God; so likewise, there is no doubt, sins are forgiven in baptism, but the operation

is of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit⁵.” You might have found from the master of the Sentences, one, against whose authority Romanists would hardly contend, as it is on his writings, and the rescript of Eugenius the IVth.⁶, the whole superstructure of the Romish sacrament is built, that the priest’s power is declarative, not judicial; the sentence of an ambassador, not a judge. It is true that the conscience of the penitent may be relieved by feeling the truth of God’s readiness to forgive, and willingness to receive the contrite, brought home to the heart, by the declaration of the lawful ambassadors of Christ, pronouncing, that is, officially declaring *as* his ministers, God’s mercy in Christ, and if the conditions imposed by God Himself are fulfilled, no doubt need exist in the mind of the penitent of the exercise of God’s mercy towards him. But he will feel that while the minister of Christ, alone, has authority to pronounce, God alone has power to forgive, and that, He alone, against whom the sin has been committed, can blot out the transgression, and cleanse the soul. The priest may, as Nathan the Prophet, say, “God hath put away thy sin;” or, declare, as the priest, that “the leprosy is healed;”

⁵ St. Ambrose, *De Spir. Sancto*, lib. 3, c. 19.

⁶ *Concordia Armenorum cum sanctâ Romanâ Ecclesiâ, et declaratio articulorum septem, novæ legis Sacramenta et pleaque alia concernantium.*—*Bullarium Romanum*, t. i. p. 337, A.D. 1439.

but, as the master of the Sentences says, “ God does it one way, the Church another ; God forgives the sin, the priest declares it forgiven ⁷. You have been imposed upon, and made to believe, that the Sacrament of Penance was of an early date, and that it was essential to absolution. Whereas, in reality, it was unknown to the Church for twelve hundred years. The Church of England uses the ancient form ; the Church of Rome, that of recent date, and not of universal acceptance. It is not to be denied that there is a practical and absolute sentence pronounced by a priest, a form which the Church of England uses in her office for the Visitation of the Sick. But no one who knows the historical evidence respecting the various forms of absolution, or has studied the service itself, or the liturgical writers who have treated on the subject, can for one moment doubt that the judicial and absolute form there used, relates solely either to censures incurred, or such breaches of the Church’s laws, as related solely to discipline, and did not touch the conscience

⁷ Hoc sane dicere et sentire possumus quod solus Deus dimittit peccata et retinet : et tamen ecclesiæ contulit potestatem ligandi et solvendi sed aliter ipse solvit vel ligat, aliter ecclesia. Ipse enim per se tantum dimittit peccatum : qui et animam mundat ab interiori maculâ et a debito æternæ mortis solvit.

Non autem hoc sacerdotibus concessit, quibus tamen tribuit potestatem solvendi et ligandi, id est ostendendi homines ligatos vel solutos. Unde Dominus leprosum sanitate prius per se restituit, deinde ad sacerdotes misit, quorum iudicio ostenderetur mundatus.—Liber Sententiarum 4. Paris, 1559. Distinct. 18, § E, F. p. 473.

as regarded direct sins against God. It is evidently intended to restore the sick penitent to the communion of the Church, who has been under actual sentence of excommunication, or feels that he is virtually in that state, from habitual neglect of the means of grace⁸. The prayer which follows the absolution puts this beyond question. For it prays that the sick member may be preserved in the unity of the Church, evidently alluding to the restoration so recently effected. The prayer utterly renounces all such absolution as would put the priest in the place of God, or even seem to arrogate that high prerogative, which belongs to God alone. The prayer does not assume that the priest has entered into the judgment seat of God, and dealt with those secret things which belong to Him alone. Far from it. The prayer says, “ And forasmuch as he putteth his full trust *ONLY in thy mercy*, impute not unto him his former sins, but strengthen him with thy blessed Spirit ;” a prayer utterly inconsistent with the idea that the absolution absolves from the guilt of sin towards God, or had judicially anticipated the verdict of the judgment seat. It is the Church of Rome who, by her unchristian principles and uncatholic practices has confounded the doctrines of absolution, and sends her members to seek peace

⁸ “ Sacerdotes . . opus justitiæ exercent in peccatores cum eos justâ pœnâ ligant ; opus misericordiæ dum in eâ aliquid relaxant vel sacramentorum communioni conciliant, alia opera in peccatores exercere nequeunt.”—Ibid. p. 474, § G.

where there is no peace. It is just in proportion as man assumes the prerogative of God, as he mixes with the incense of Christ's meritorious sacrifice the imperfect works of man, as he presumes to withhold or to dispense mercy according to his own will, that the peaceful fruits of Redeeming love are lost to man, that the true mercy-seat is no longer the resting-place, and balm of the contrite heart, and that the channels of Divine grace dry up. Peace is to be found where it ever has been found, in Divine mercy, not in human judgment. Never was there on earth a system so calculated to minister to sin, to deaden conscience, and destroy all sense of moral responsibility, as the confessional. "The whole process," says a living writer of the Roman Catholic Church, who is calling loudly for reform on Catholic principles, "the whole process involves an utter misconception of the nature of repentance. And then, how utterly superficial the theology which regards the justification desired or obtained, as consisting wholly in priestly absolution, and not at all in the state of the soul, or its renewal, and which thus decides the question! How heathenish, to make reconciliation with God consist in mere external acts! How repugnant to all ideas of true repentance, when it is planned beforehand as to the time, the day, the place, and the priest, when, where, and from whom, the pardon may be obtained! So then, life goes on, and such confessions are repeated over and over again. Sin never con-

quered becomes a terrible force, and in spite of all sacraments, the soul sinks deeper and deeper. These real evils merit the attention of the Church⁹.”

Such is the system, as described by a Romanist, in which you have sought peace, and in which you would direct others to find it. If there be peace, it is the peace of conscience seared as with a red hot iron, insensible to spiritual influence, lost to all the finer touches of moral feeling. Nothing so stands between the soul of man and God, nothing so utterly annihilates all traces of the Divine image within, as the confessional. I believe you are ignorant of its abominations. But, before you sully the modesty of your own wife, or corrupt the innocence of your children, read it for yourself; and, if, when you have read it, you can submit either to those soul-destroying influences which abound in that system, then I shall be willing to admit, that the demoralizing and debasing spirit of Rome, is more rapid in the infusion of its poison, more venomous and deadly in its effects, than I had hitherto believed. I will not sully these pages with quotations; but this I say, without fear of contradiction, that the language is such as would not have been tolerated in Pagan Rome; from which a heathen philosopher would have shrunk

⁹ State of the Church. By John Baptist Von Hirschen, D.D., Dean of the Metropolitan Church of Freiburg, Breisgau, and Professor of Theology in the Roman Catholic University of that city.

with horror, and which even Roman satirists, coarse as they are, would have been ashamed to use. If a conclave of the most corrupted minds, which this world could produce, had been collected to compose a work replete with the grossest abominations, which the most licentious human being could conceive, they could not have produced any thing more thoroughly disgusting than the confessional. If you had read some of the best and purest writers, who are themselves Romanists, you would have found that they advised an entire reform of that so-called sacrament of Penance, to which you have fled for peace, as it was calculated rather to confirm in sin, than amend the life. Auricular confession as now exercised in the Church of Rome, and that sacrament of Penance, which you desire as a means of peace, are as alien from the spirit of the Church of England, as they were ever alien from a pure branch of Christ's Church. Those who are pandering to the morbidness of sickly minds, are not faithful ministers of the Church of England.

When the sacrament of Penance, as it is called, was renounced, all its forms, rites, and customs were renounced with it. There was no room left for the confessional. Those who use the forms of absolution prescribed by the Church otherwise than as intended, and indeed rubrically directed, are not ministering according to the doctrine and discipline which they have promised to maintain. It is an unwarrantable exercise of private judgment to apply

to one purpose that which the Church intended for another. It is the custom, I am aware, with some persons now to hear confessions before the eucharist, and to absolve in a judicial form. But it is a gross perversion not only of the spirit of the Church, but its very letter. The exhortation to the Lord's Supper urges those who perceive that they have offended either by will, word, or deed, to bewail their own sinfulness, and to confess themselves to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment of life; a sentence evidently borrowed from St. Chrysostom¹. But when the penitent, who cannot quiet his own conscience, is exhorted to come to some discreet and learned minister of God's word and open his grief, he must know little of the realities of the ministerial office, little of the duties of a Christian pastor, little of the consolations of God's holy word, who cannot see the clear distinction between opening grief and confessing sin; between the absolution by

¹ Allow me to refer your Lordship to Chrysostom's fourth homily on repentance and prayer, and you will see most beautifully and effectively described what the Church of England calls absolution, by the ministry of God's holy word, t. ii. p. 302, edit. Benedict. :—

“Wherefore I beseech you again and again, I implore, I pray you, that you frequently confess to God. I do not lead you into the presence of your fellow-servants, I do not compel you to reveal your sins to man: open out your conscience before God, show *Him* your wounds, seek from *Him* your medicine, show it to *Him* who does not upbraid, but heals; who, though thou be silent, knowest all things.”—“On the Incomprehensible Nature of God.” Chrys. t. i. p. 490, ed. Bened.

the ministry of God's holy word and the judicial sentence of a frail human judge. In the one instance, the minister of God's holy word is pouring out from the fulness of Christ's redemption that peace of God which passeth all understanding, full of present comfort and future hopes ; revealing promises based on the immutable word of God, and assuring mercy on the sole condition of "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ ;" allaying grief, and sowing the seeds of future piety by communicating the knowledge of that "love which passeth knowledge ;" and thus constraining to newness of life by brighter anticipations, and a soul stimulated to new exertions by a more confident hope. And all this by the ministry of God's holy word ; by light direct from heaven ; by coming, as it were, to the living mercy-seat covered with the clouds of incense which surround it ; communing not with man, but God ; laying aside the garment spotted with the flesh, because conscious that as in Christ's presence there is life, so in that presence also must be holiness.

In the other instance, man indeed confesses sin, but it is to his fellow-man ; the words of absolution issue from the lips, but they fall short of the heart. They bear on them no divine impress ; they have in them, like the Jewish sacrifices, the marks of their own imperfections ; they are renewed day by day for the weakness and unprofitableness of them ; they may deaden for a short time the scruples

of a morbid conscience, but they can administer no healthier tone to the soul, convey no lasting comfort, nor generate a holier spirit, which would seek in heaven its sustenance, and endeavour to perfect the life which is hid with Christ in God. You have counselled your late parishioners to go for peace, where there is no peace; to leave the fountain of living waters, and hew out for themselves broken cisterns which hold no water. Believe me, you do not know the deep resources of that Zion which you have deserted, you had not drunk deep enough from the wellspring of life which is within her. You are unconscious of the sublimity which marks her as God's temple, the graces which flow through all her holy ordinances, and which sustain her faithful and humble children in that peace which, you say, you could not find within her. Pardon me if I say, that an undisciplined mind, impatient under the Church's trials, magnified its defects, while it overlooked its symmetry and beauty. Having left it, you endeavour to vilify a Church, whose doctrines you really did not know, and whose excellence, consequently, you could not appreciate. God forbid that your late parishioners should take the fatal step which you have done, without being at least better instructed as to what they leave, as well as what they embrace.

The next subject to which your Lordship adverts, is one, which you have so confused by the manner in which you stated your several positions, that it

is not easy, except at great length, to show the fallacy of your reasoning. You say, "Again, I always maintained that all who dissented from the Established Church, were, by the very fact of their separation, excluded from the graces and certainty of salvation, which are inseparable from the true Church of Christ." I must remind your Lordship, the Church of England is not responsible for your opinions, or for what you had maintained. The Church of England carefully abstains from judging those that are without ; she does not exclude from the pale of salvation those who dissent from her ; and while she feels herself bound to adhere to the polity, and to seek grace through the means which God has ordained, she does not so arrogantly interfere with the prerogative of God, as to limit his mercies, or tie them down to any special means, as if He were unable to dispense them as He willed. If I were to deal as severely as justice would require, I should call on you to explain what you mean, by grace and certainty of salvation being inseparable from the Church of Christ, for the language is capable of more than one interpretation ; it would confine your idea of the true Church to the invisible Church of God's elect, or convict you of heresy.

But I pass on to a more important point. You go on to say, "I at that time held that absurd notion, that it was possible that separate national Churches, distinct from each other, and anathema-

tizing one another, could make up the One Church of Christ, and on this ground I pressed upon the Dissenters the necessity of union with the Established Church. But here a difficulty presented itself to my mind.” There would have been no difficulty had your Lordship studied Holy Scripture as you should have done, and primitive antiquity. You have, doubtless, read the Apocalypse; you have there read the address of the Lord of Life Himself to the seven Churches. “The seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” If you admit, that these seven separate Churches (for such they were), form part of the Universal Church of Christ, *your* idea of unity is at an end. Churches they were, on the authority of Christ Himself. They had distinct localities, distinct rulers; had been guilty of offences of a different kind, had distinct rewards and punishments, each ruler had distinct and independent authority, and was dealt with, individually, as responsible for the acts of those who were subject to his jurisdiction. Would your Lordship venture to say, that the schismatics or heretics, by which ever name you please to call them, of the Church of Smyrna or Pergamos, destroyed the national, or local, or ecclesiastical independence of each Church; or that the existence of heresy within them, or schismatics rent from them, made them cease to be Churches? You would bring yourself to this dilemma, you would make Rome, who, you say, has jurisdiction over all Churches, responsible

for every schism, every heresy, which has arisen from the time of the Apostles to this hour. At her door must be laid the disruption of Christendom. It is no wonder that you were in difficulty ; when you could not distinguish between schism or *dissent* from a *National* Church, and the existence of two separate National Churches ; that you could not distinguish the Nicolaitans of Ephesus, or Pergamos, or the idolatry of Thyatira, from the *being* of these separate Churches. This is your argument, Because the Church of England endeavours to reconcile Dissenters to her communion, your Lordship thinks that a Church in England cannot exist nationally as separate from Rome. I do not think such logic would be tolerated in the schools. Surely your late parishioners will reject such reasoning as most inconclusive. On what authority does your Lordship say, separate national Churches anathematize one another ? Certainly the Church of England does not. You cannot have forgotten yet, the Prayer for all Conditions of Men ; the last Collect of Good Friday, or that on St. Simon and St. Jude's day. Rome, indeed, does anathematize all who dissent from her. I give from the Council of Trent, from a copy certified by the autographs of the secretary and notaries of that council, the following fearful words. They are taken from the "*Acclamationes Patrum in fine Concilii.*" The Cardinal offering up the prayer, the assembled Fathers making the response.

C. Anathema cunctis hæreticis.

Resp. Fiat. Fiat.

I need not tell you that the Bull in Cœnâ Domini annually commits to eternal damnation all who dissent from Rome. No other Church uses similar language. You have left Mount Gerizim for Mount Ebal, the mount of blessing for the mount of cursing; charge not on others the principles which you have adopted yourself, nor attribute to others, sin which belongs to Rome alone. The premises which you laid down are as false as the conclusions which you have drawn. You have adopted the principles of Judaism and forsaken those of Christ. You walk by sight, not by faith, have a visible head, an earthly centre, to which every eye must turn as the Israelites to Jerusalem. You have made vitality depend on union with a Church which has been the seat of the grossest heresies, even that of denying the Lord that bought us. She has been the real cause of all divisions which exist, and, really, is as divided in herself, is as utterly without the principle of unity, as the wildest schismatics, from whose bodies daily drop off those portions which constitute new sects. Her ruling principle is intolerance, her argument the sword, her strength the blindness of her victims, and their ignorance of the word of God.

I pass now to the question of Baptism. You say; "Again, I believed that the established Church maintained as its exclusive teaching the doctrine of

Baptismal Regeneration, and of the real presence of our Lord in the Eucharist."

I shall reserve the latter subject to future consideration: I shall now only refer to your assertion relative to the doctrine of Baptism, as held by the Church of England.

Your Lordship of course alludes to the celebrated Gorham case, and the judgment pronounced by the lay tribunal, which determined that Mr. Gorham had not so depraved the Book of Common Prayer as to deprive him of the right of institution into the parish to which he had been presented by the Crown. You say, that the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration was as frequently denied as taught, that the Bishops did not agree to vindicate it; and you conclude, that because one not holding the doctrine in question had been obtruded against the consent of the Bishop into a parish, not even in the Diocese in which you held a cure of souls, that you had no authority for your teaching, or that others had equal authority to deny the true doctrines of Christ's Catholic Church. Now, for argument sake, I will admit the worst case that can well be imagined. I will suppose that the Crown had forced upon a reluctant Bishop a heretic, who was, in spite of episcopal remonstrance and refusal to admit him, actually instituted and inducted by a metropolitan who had himself renounced the orthodox doctrine, in defence of which he once wrote; that he had, either from worldly policy or submis-

sion to the civil power, and to ensure its favour, altered his own work, in which his principles were avowed, and which were in accordance with the received doctrine of the Catholic Church, and, as an integral part of it, the Church of England. Admitting all this, and more, if necessary; that it was Arianism, instead of the doubt of Baptismal Regeneration; was this sufficient cause for your leaving the Church in which you were serving, or denying the authority on which you taught? It was far from it. There are parallel cases in the Church's history, where the orthodox Clergy held fast the sacred deposit committed to them; and, in spite of the civil power, of an Arian head, and the virulence of persecution, earnestly contended for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. What would have been the state of the Church, how fearfully would the faith of Christ have been perilled, if the defenders of the Divinity of the Son had all deserted their posts, when their truth, their courage, and their constancy were most wanted in the Church of God? What, when Liberius signed the Arian decrees, would have been the state of the Church, if the holy men who resisted the seductions of an Arian court, and braved the persecutions of Arian tyrants, had shrunk from their pious labours, and fled from the difficulties, the trials, and sorrows, to which they were exposed, when Constantius forced Arianism on an unwilling hierarchy, and Liberius fell under the tyranny, and from the basest of

earthly motives, if we are to believe the Cardinal Baronius sacrificed the faith which had been committed to him²? Sad specimen of infallibility.

They would have left the Church a prey to heresy, they would have themselves escaped much trial and persecution ; but have betrayed the cause of their divine Master, and left their flocks to be devoured by the wolves which had crept into the sheepfold. The orthodox pastors never for one moment contemplated such desertion of a plain duty. They did not wait for a conclave of bishops to re-assert a doctrine which had been determined by a general council ; they did not desire that which would have weakened rather than strengthened the authority of the Church and their own teaching ; they appealed to the decrees of Nice, to the authorized doctrine of the Church, to the Word of

² Baronius's words are : "Cum ille, qui instar Samsonis validè adversus impios Philistæos ac strenuè decertaverat et usque adeo ipsos impetus fregisset Imperatoris, atque Arianorum phalanges tolerantiâ exilii superasset, exciso nescio quo pacto ab ejus vertice, fortitudinis crine, hebetatoque prorsus robore pristino sacerdotalis constantiæ, exurgit imbellis, et dat turpiter manus ipsum quærentibus adversariis. Quod si conjectura interdum ex effectibus intima cordis scrutari licet, non alia Dalila illi detrimento fuit, quam invidia humanæ laudis gloria compta ; quippe qui ægro ferebat animo, intrusum ab Arianis, (ut dictum est,) Felicem agere Romæ Pontificem, se vero exulem atque à sua sede procul extorrem ; quam ut reciperet, et ex eâ Felicem ejiceret, oblatas illas sordidas condiciones accepit tandem."—Baronii Annales, t. iv. p. 606, Luccæ, 1739.

God, the standard of truth. The orthodox did not imagine that they had lost their authority to teach, because the majority of the bishops were Arians, and the emperor filled, not parishes, but sees, with men devoted to the Arian heresy. I admit there was much to distress a mind, which was alive to the evils which threatened the Church of England in that hour of her darkness. But the more deeply the evil was felt, the more should the energies of her faithful sons have been exerted to prevent the spread of the contagion. Your duty was a plain one. It was, to take the Prayer Book in your hand, and show the unbroken evidence of the authorized teaching of the Church ; to show, from the baptismal service, the positive declaration of the regeneration of every baptized infant with the Holy Spirit ; its adoption into Christ's holy Church. You might have referred your parishioners to the Catechism, in which the doctrine is as plainly declared ; to the Confirmation Service, in which the bishop in a solemn prayer to God addresses Him, as "*having* vouchsafed to regenerate the baptized by water and the Holy Ghost." You might have cited the Articles, by which *you* were *bound* to teach, as evidence of the truth. Nay more, you might have brought forward the strongest historic evidence that could be adduced in favour of any doctrine, one of the things which you desire to have, the authoritative declaration of the bishops and the Church

at large. You might have told your parishioners, that the deliberate judgment of the Church *had* been pronounced; that at the Savoy Conference³ the question had been raised, that the Dissenters desired to alter the very words of the service because they were SO STRONGLY AFFIRMATIVE OF THAT TRUTH, of which you say there is doubt; that the alteration was refused because “baptism *is* our spiritual regeneration; because Scripture declares it, and the Nicene Creed affirms it; which Creed you had yourself subscribed, and which you were bound to teach, as one “that ought thoroughly to be received and believed.” And further, that it had been declared by the bishops at that very conference where the question was raised, “that we may say, IN FAITH, of every child that is baptized, that it is regenerated by God’s Holy Spirit;” and you might have told them, that the whole body of the Church of England assembled in Convocation had ratified these decrees, and made them binding upon every one of her members, and, further, added a rubric at the end of the baptismal service, affirming, “It is certain by God’s Word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved;” thus making the doctrine of the Church of England certain; for either God does convey remission of sins in baptism, or children are saved without remission of sin through Christ,—a heresy from which

³ See Cardwell’s Conferences, pp. 324, 325—356.

the Church of England is free. The opinion of an individual, the decision of a lay tribunal, the mere force of the civil power, however unduly exercised, can no more alter the faith of the Church, invalidate the authority of her priesthood, or silence the voice of the faithful, than the tyranny of Constantius, the fall of Liberius, or the teaching of the Arian bishops, invalidated the authority of the Nicene Council, or destroyed the faith of the Church. If, indeed, your position were true, that union with Rome was necessary to the vitality of the Church, then indeed the faith *would* have failed; for Rome was the centre of heresy, not of faith, it was the stronghold of Arianism, the seat of Antichrist. If what you arrogate to Rome had then been conceded, or founded on truth, the fearful consequences deprecated by Gregory the Great would have been fulfilled, the Universal Church would have fallen from her place, if he who is called universal had fallen ⁴.

But no such pretension then existed. The several patriarchs had their independent jurisdiction; and if one portion of the Church fell, another fulfilled the purpose of the Redeemer, and maintained

⁴ Si igitur illud nomen in eâ Ecclesiâ sibi quisquam arripit, quod apud bonorum omnium iudicium fuit: universa ergo Ecclesia, quod absit, a statu suo corrui, quando is qui appellatur universalis cadit. Sed absit a cordibus Christianis nomen istud blasphemiae in quo omnium Sacerdotum honor adimitur, dum ab uno sibi dementèr arrogatur.—Gregorii Magni Op. t. ii. p. 748.

the truth inviolate. Let me now ask—what have you gained by this change? You have left the Church of England because in your mind there existed doubts as to the doctrine of the sacraments. Does Rome give you greater security? Your Lordship has, of course, before you took so decided a step, carefully examined the Romish doctrine of the sacraments; you have, doubtless, studied carefully the Council of Trent, that you may not fall under the anathema of that council; you have read the decree which declares that Church's law as regards intention: "If any shall say, that there is not required in the ministers, while they perform and confer the sacraments, at least the intention of doing what the Church does, let him be anathema." This decree cuts up by the roots all certainty as regards the sacraments; nay more, it destroys all probability of the existence of a Church; for with you, *Orders* is a sacrament. If one link were wanting in the whole line of succession, the Apostolic chain is broken; and will you venture to affirm, that for 1800 years the intention of the minister has never been wanting? It is not enough for you to tell me that the sacrament of orders confers an indelible character; that argument might avail *out* of the Romish Church, but in it, it is valueless. The doctrine of intention stops the current of Divine grace, and dries up the fountain of mercy at its very spring. It stands as the enemy of man's peace

at the very door of hope, and blasts the promises as they issue from the Holiest. Your Lordship, of course, knows that there are four kinds of intention, —actual, virtual, habitual, and interpretative : that the two latter are insufficient, the virtual questionable, the *actual* alone *certain*. Where then is the certainty of baptism in the Church of Rome ? God may have willed the child to live anew, He may have purposed its redemption, He may have ordained all the necessary means ; but the intention may have been wanting in the minister, at least, efficient intention ; and the grace is stayed, the new life withheld ; and the infant, *supposed* to be regenerate, and a child of God, remains unrenewed, the child of wrath, even as though the waters of baptism had never been vouchsafed as a means of grace. And you have left a Church, because one doubtful case arose, and embraced that of Rome, where *all* is doubt, where salvation is made to rest, not on the will of God, but upon the intention of man. I believe you have never duly considered the subject. If there be a Church on earth *without certainty* ; without well-grounded hope ; without the attributes of a true Church ; it is the Church of Rome. A mind that *thinks* must be miserable. It never *could* be satisfied that it held the truth. The Church of Rome, therefore, forbids its members to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good ; nay, even condemns those who use their moral and intellec-

tual faculties. You seem also to be ignorant of the real state of the Romish Church as regards objects of worship. If there be no authority for teaching, where a Church is not agreed as to its doctrines, or where, on any given point, there is the same authority to deny as to assert, what becomes of the authority of the Church of Rome to teach? You cannot but know that while a large portion of the Romish Church vehemently assert the doctrine of the immaculate conception, as large a portion strenuously deny it; that it has been the source of endless contentions, and that when the Franciscan party prayed the pope to establish it as an article of faith, this infallible head actually feared to rend asunder the Church of Rome by his decision, but answered, as the Delphic oracle, with such ambiguity, as to render his decision nugatory, and leave him the power of sheltering himself from the fury of the Dominicans, by the denial of its being established as an article of faith, but only recommended to the piety of the faithful! While, therefore, there is a festival established to celebrate this fiction, a very large portion of the same Church denounce it as heresy; and all this, not respecting the doctrine of a sacrament, the importance of which I do not mean to question, but respecting an *object of worship*, one to whom all but Divine honour is paid, and to whom language is addressed, and glory ascribed, which belongs to God alone. And this in a Church claiming to have an infallible head, a living judge of

controversy, who for 600 years (for the twelfth century seems to be the time at which this doctrine was first promulgated) has been unable to settle this question, but permitted an internecine war to be carried on between Franciscans and Dominicans, between the Jesuits and the divines of Paris, and who still shrinks from the exercise of his infallibility, lest the enemies of the doctrine should show its recent origin, and the heresy which it involves. If disagreement respecting doctrines invalidates the authority, or annuls the power of the priesthood, you may write "I-chabod" on the Church of Rome, for her glory is departed from her. I shall not enter upon what you consider the stirring of God's grace within you. I should be sorry to speak lightly of what any one thought to be the call of God. I may question in my own mind the reality of that call, and may attribute to morbid sensibility, a dissatisfied mind, and an ill-informed judgment, what you sincerely believe to have been the effect of God's Spirit. Nor shall I dispute the right of private judgment; though, I confess, I should have expected a well-informed minister of the Church of England, to have made a grave distinction between the *right* of private judgment, and the responsibility of private judgment: the one always exercised with humility, with caution, with holy awe, weighing opinions not only in the balance of truth, but testing them by the collective wisdom of the Church, by the writings of the ablest

divines, by the decrees of councils, and, not least, the judgment of that Church, to whose doctrines and discipline that minister had given his unfeigned assent ; the other exercised with unbridled licence, with undisciplined self-will, and often with a temper glad to break away from authority, which it desires to repudiate, and urged to make excuses on the plea of conscience, which should be set down, in truth, to precipitance, and human feelings little in accordance with that charity which is not rash, and is not puffed up.

Your Lordship says that by the exercise of the right of private judgment you were convinced, that your plain and obvious duty was to submit yourself to the one true Church of Christ, the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is governed by Bishops, united under one visible head, the Bishop of Rome, and you say “this was the result of your searching the Scriptures.” As you have not pointed out one single passage to show your late parishioners what led you to this conclusion, it may be fairly assumed that you could not adduce any that you thought likely to convince *them*. You felt the weakness of your ground, and therefore wisely left it, without even a hint as to the process of reasoning by which you arrived at the conclusion, or the passages of Scripture on which your reasoning was based. But one thing seems to have escaped your attention, that such a head, as you think you have found, such an one as the Church of Rome

claims to have, not only would destroy the principle of unity, for which you seek, but that of Christianity itself. You never seem to have taken into consideration, that Christianity is a dispensation of FAITH ; that a visible head would be a contradiction of the principle which the Church was founded to promulgate. As long as the Jewish system lasted, which was a temporal one, and the tribes of Israel were bound to go up to Jerusalem to worship, it was consistent with the whole dispensation that there should be a high priest, who should exercise his functions in the worldly sanctuary, he was of necessity localized. God had put his name in Zion, and thither the tribes went up. But then the promises annexed to the Jewish law were temporal, its judgments were so ; all its enactments had reference to a system that was to pass away. St. Paul says, " There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God." Now there is nothing more remarkable in the entire change wrought in the dispensation of grace, than the very prominent place given to the change of the priesthood, and the temple in which his functions are to be exercised. " We have an High Priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens ; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not

man ;” and because Christ “ continueth ever He hath an unchangeable priesthood.” “ Wherefore He is able also to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them ;” and because “ we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,” because “ we have an High Priest over the house of God,” we are exhorted to “ draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.”

There is hardly a single principle which the inspired writers insist on as essential to the Gospel dispensation which Rome has not violated, or so neutralized as to have virtually destroyed it. Romanism is in all its features essentially a revival of Judaism. Its reiterated propitiatory sacrifices, which can never make the comers thereunto perfect ; its meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances ; its jubilees or years of release ; all these are practically Jewish, not Christian ordinances ; and, further, the absolute judicial sentence pronounced, anticipates future judgment, and leaves no room for the exercise of faith. If we turn to the eucharist, with the Romanists it is not an object of faith, but sight, held up to the eye for veneration, not to the heart for acceptance. Their doctrine respecting it destroys the very nature of sacrament. Again, the Romanist looks to Rome as the Jew to Jerusalem. He has reconstructed a localized system of worship, which is utterly opposed to what our Lord declared should be the great principle of the Gospel. You have

adopted this carnal and worldly system. A visible head is utterly inconsistent with a dispensation of faith. The true way to investigate the claims of Rome is not to look at Romanism simply in detail, but view it in the principles on which it is founded. In this it has the spirit of Antichrist. It substitutes that which is visible for what is invisible, that which is carnal for what is spiritual, and hence walks by sight, not by faith. Its practices are the result of a *false principle*; they are the *necessary* consequences of that visible system which is opposed to a dispensation of faith. Let me ask you, what would become of that unity which you so much desire, and which you think you have found, if the Church had, as you suppose, a *visible* head. St. Augustine says, "a part of the Church is a stranger on earth, a part dwelling in the heavens;" and in his "Enarratio in Psalmum 62" he thus writes: "If He is the Head, we are the members; all his Church which is every where diffused is his body, of which He (Christ) is Head. But not the faithful only which now are, but those which have been before us, and those who shall be after us to the end of time, all these belong to his body, of which He is the Head, who has ascended into heaven⁵." And in the same address St. Augustine says: "If ye be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. If, therefore, we have died in

⁵ Enarratio in Psalmum 62, vol. iv. p. 607. D. edit. Bened.

Him and have risen again in Him, and He dieth in us and riseth in us (for *He* is the *Unity* of Head and Body), not undeservedly is his voice our voice, and our voice is his."

According to the voice of antiquity, as well as Scripture, Christ is the Head of the Church⁶." But supposing this visible head, where would be the unity? "The true Sion," says St. Augustine, "the true Jerusalem is eternal in the heavens, which is our Mother. She brought us forth. She is the Church of the saints. She nourished us. She is partly in a strange land, partly dwelling in heaven⁷." If, then, part be dwelling in heaven; if Christ be the Head, and the Church his Body, the Church militant as well as triumphant; there *cannot* be a visible head, the centre of unity, without the *destruction* of unity. You *must* separate the body. You cannot make the Bishop of Rome head of the Church triumphant: you cannot so derogate from the glory of Christ. You cannot sever that part of his body from Him, as you have the Church militant here on earth. You *must* destroy the unity of his body. You must *cease* to hold the Head, "from which all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." This unity was the hope and glory of the Church of old. "Since, therefore, Christ is the Head of the Church, and the Church

⁶ See Ephes. i. 22, 23; v. 23. Col. i. 18.

⁷ St. Aug. Psalm 149, vol. iv. p. 1684. B. edit. Bened.

is his body, whole Christ is both Head and body. He has now risen. We have, therefore, a Head in heaven. Our Head intercedes for us ; our Head, without sin and without death, now propitiates God for our sins, that we, rising in the end, and changed into heavenly glory, may follow our Head and the rest of the members. But while we are here we are his members ; let us not despair, for we shall follow our Head⁸.” You have chosen a head, a high priest who continueth not by reason of *death*. If you follow *him*, it is to death. You have forsaken the principle both of unity and *life*. St. Augustine argues⁹, “ that things built on their several foundations have a tendency toward that foundation, and thus acquire stability ; and the Church of God, therefore, the foundation of which is Christ, has a tendency towards heaven, because our foundation is there, the Lord Jesus Christ, sitting at the right hand of God.” The tendencies of the Romish Church are downwards. Its foundation and head is on earth, liable to death. It has no hope pregnant with immortality.

Your Lordship has brought forward the Unity of the Church as one of the points which led you to take the step which you have done. But you seem to have very indistinct ideas on the subject ; for, after adducing many marks of unity, as you sup-

⁸ St. Augustine, t. v. p. 663. Sermo 137. In Evang. Johan. c. 10.

⁹ Enarratio in Ps. 29, vol. iv. p. 139.

pose, you say, the Apostles speak of Christian unity as “ the abiding in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship.” This is exactly what the Reformed Church contends for against the Romanist. It is what the early writers against heretics contended for. It is what St. Jude, by Divine inspiration, exhorted the Christians to contend for, “ the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” So that your various signs of unity may be passed over, though among them you have made some curious mistakes, such as calling the Church the vine; whereas Christ calls Himself the Vine, his disciples the branches. If the Vine were the *Church*, it would be utterly inconsistent with your idea of unity. For the many branches would form the one Vine, as many Churches form the one Body in Christ, as the Greek Church explains it, “ that the separateness of the visible organization of particular Churches does not hinder them from being all spiritually great members of the one Body of the Universal Church, from having one Head, Christ, and one spirit of faith and grace¹.” This is an answer to the following question: “ How does it agree with the unity of the Church, that there are many separate and independent Churches, as those of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Russia?” a principle of unity utterly opposed to that which you desire to establish. St. Augustine makes this distinction between the universal, and

¹ Larger Catechism of Greek Church, p. 1, on Faith.

particular Churches. Enarratio, Ps. 8, t. 4: "Luna et stellæ in cœlis sunt fundatæ, quia et universalis Ecclesia, in cujus sæpe significatione luna ponitur et particulatim per loca singula Ecclesiæ, quas nomine stellarum insinuat, arbitror in eisdem Scripturis collocatæ sunt, quas cœlorum vocabulo positas credimus." I adduce this, not as contending for the illustration, but as a proof of the fact, that in the judgment of the writers in the early Church, particular Churches could constitute one universal Church.

But if Christian unity is the abiding in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, if the Church be the one faith, the unity cannot be dependent on any external polity, nor in union with one visible head; because if that one visible head departed from the faith, which is the principle of unity, the unity is destroyed. This is the case with Rome. You were led into the fatal step which you have taken by confounding the Faith with the Church, by the abandonment of a principle which you have yourself admitted, namely, that "Christian unity consisted in the abiding in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship." This is the principle laid down by the inspired writer of the Acts of the Apostles. "They continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and prayer." These are the essentials of a true Church. You have been led astray by not adhering strictly to this rule. You have reasoned on a false theory,

and have necessarily fallen into error. You could not carry out your theory, and have inadvertently conceded the whole argument. If you had duly studied the Athanasian Creed, you would have seen, that adherence to the Catholic Faith is what is declared essential; and it is remarkable, that though so much stress is laid on the "*Catholic Faith*," "*Christian Unity*," the "*Catholic Religion*," the term *Church* never occurs. In those days, orthodox *Faith* was deemed THE Essential; where that was, was the true Church. Had you examined the early writers, who had treated of heresy, you would have had less difficulty. You would have seen that they admitted the existence of separate and independent Churches, and contended for the communion, *not* of the Church, but of the *Faith*, without which essential there was no true Church, no bond of unity.

Vincentius Lirinensis says, "What shall a Catholic Christian do, if any portion of the Church cut itself off from the communion of the Catholic faith? Why then there is nothing to be done but to prefer the body that is sound before a putrefied and infectious member. But what if some new error should infect not only a small part, but should be ready to spread itself at the same time over the whole Church? Then we must cleave close to antiquity, which cannot be of a sudden totally corrupted by any novel imposture²." Perhaps you may be surprised to

² Vincentius Lirin. adversus Hæreses, c. 4, 5, 6.

hear, that in the former of these instances Vincentius alludes to the Donatists, in the latter to the Church of Rome. And Vincentius says: "The whole train of misery arose from introducing human inventions for divine truths." It would be foreign from the present discussion to prove that unity must consist, from the nature of the Godhead, in unity of DOCTRINE. The Church is the pillar and ground of *truth*. It must speak as the oracles of God. Revelation is the revelation of God to man. It *must* be at unity with itself. It can admit "no shadow of turning." You have stated truly, that the Church is the keeper of revelation: you have omitted one most important point, that she is also the witness of it. The revelation must be ever one and the same. The faith must be at unity with itself; and therefore St. Paul says, "Though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." St. Ignatius says, "Where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church³;" that is, where the doctrine of Christ is, in its truth. But you seem to have confounded the very idea of unity. You seem to imagine that unity is absolute *oneness*; though it is to be hoped, when you wrote as you did of the eternal Godhead, you did not deny the Trinity in Unity; and if you do not deny it, your exemplification contradicts your argument, and is opposed to your idea of unity. For no one denies

³ Epistola ad Smyrnæos, § 8. Cotelieri, vol. ii. p. 36.

the unity of Christ's body ; the question is, in what that unity consists. You are equally unfortunate with revelation. You say, Christianity or revelation is one. The sentence is not very intelligible, but take it in any point of view, and you are wrong. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." To Him the law and the prophets bear witness. I suppose you would not deny, that the Old Testament is part of revelation. We are distinctly told, that the mystery of Christ's purpose, as regarded the constitution of his Church, was not made known under the Jewish dispensation as it was under the Christian ; that fuller light was thrown on the mystery by a more enlarged communication of the spirit of truth, which was afforded to the Apostles and teachers of the Gospel. In one sense the revelation was one. It proceeded from one divine Author ; its purpose was one, the revelation of Christ ; but in the sense in which you desire to establish the principle of unity, it was essentially opposed. It consisted of various independent parts, which, when taken together, formed a perfect whole, a complete revelation. It would have been imperfect without one of its component parts. But the Bible, though at unity with itself, as it must be, because it is the revelation of God, is distinct in its several parts, each independent of the other, except so far as it is united in the source of unity, the eternal Godhead, by whose Spirit the whole was indited, and whose will it reveals. The Church is united in its divine

Head, and in the *doctrine* which, emanating from Him, must ever be one and the same. Now the Church of Rome is not only not at unity with the faith once delivered to saints, but she is actually not at unity with herself. I speak not of individual writers, for whom the Church of Rome may not be held responsible; I speak of the Council of Trent, and papal bulls.

In the third session of the Council of Trent, the divines, in council assembled, declare, that the Creed which the Church of Rome uses, namely, the Nicene Creed, is the principle in which all who profess the Faith of Christ necessarily agree, and is that firm and *only* foundation against which the gates of hell shall not prevail⁴. The Creed is then recited, “totidem verbis.” You might suppose an act so deliberately done, so fully and carefully expressed, would have been as binding on the Church of Rome, as the Nicene Creed had always been on the true Catholic Church, and that this solid and single foundation, in which all Christians should necessarily agree, would have been at least preserved whole and undefiled by Rome herself; and the unity of the faith thus be preserved, at least by her, who

⁴ The original words are: “Quare symbolum fidei, quo Sancta Romana Ecclesia utitur, tanquam principium illud in quo omnes qui fidem Christi profitentur necessario conveniunt ac fundamentum primum et unicum contra quod portæ inferni nunquam prævalebunt, totidem verbis, quibus in omnibus Ecclesiis legitur exprinendum esse censuit, quod quidem ejusmodi est—Credo,” &c.

professes to be the centre of unity, under one visible head. The date of this authentic declaration of Faith is February, 1546. The Bull for the confirmation of the Council of Trent, was 1564. In the same year were added twelve new articles of Faith, appended to the Nicene Creed, which were declared to be "the true Catholic Faith, out of which none can be saved." To which of these confessions of Faith, is the professor of Christian Faith to turn? Is it to the Nicene Creed as it stands in the third session of the council, or as it stands in the Bull of Pius the Fourth? Against the former, we are told, the gates of hell shall not prevail; out of the latter, we are told, none can be saved. If, as you say, "The Church is the one dove, the one ark of safety, the one Faith," the *one* Faith is certainly not in the Romish Church. The Church of England abides in the Apostles' doctrine, she holds the Creeds inviolate, *whole* and UNDEFILED. The Romish Church does not. She has added to her Creed, as she has to the objects of her worship. I pass over your other signs of unity as they are, most of them, such as do not require an answer. One I shall touch on, as it has some relation to the subject. You say, Christ called the Church the *one* Kingdom. If you had selected an illustration calculated utterly to overthrow the position which you desire to establish, you could not have selected one that would more completely effect your purpose. You say, He called the Church "the one Kingdom."

The Gospel dispensation, or Church of Christ, is

so often called the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of Heaven, that it is not easy to determine to which passage you allude, as you have no references. I conclude, that you meant to draw the attention of your late parishioners to those passages which speak more directly than others of the appointment of Christ's kingdom, and the rule which was to be established. Our Lord says (Luke xxii. 28), "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." There is a similar passage, Matt. xix. 28, "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" and in the Revelation, "I saw thrones and they sat on them," which, says St. Augustine, "is not to be understood of the day of judgment; but the seats of the rulers, and the rulers are to be understood as those who govern the Church *now*⁵." Here then we have *a* kingdom, but twelve thrones, twelve rulers. And, St. Augustine says, "Not only twelve, or where would Paul sit, who laboured more than they all, for the traitor's place was filled by Matthias⁶." But, he says, "these were the rulers of the Church." There was no idea of any one visible head, any supremacy of one

⁵ Liber De Civitate Dei, 20. c. 9.

⁶ Enarratio, Ps. 90, t. iv. p. 968.

over the other, any unity but that of faith and charity. The twelve rulers were but a mystical representation of the government of the universal Church, the equality of the rulers under one Head, *Christ*. "The Church was built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom (Christ) all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." So in the Revelation, "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." These several governments were no bar to unity. The rule of Timothy at Ephesus broke not the unity of the Church, because Titus ruled at Crete. They were on different thrones. Their seats of government were distinct and independent, but the Church or body of Christ was one, in which they had their jurisdiction. They kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and unity was preserved because there was no undue assumption of authority, which if it had belonged to any Church, would have belonged to Jerusalem, which was the mother of us all. This was conceded in the Church of Trent⁷.

There is indeed one kingdom of Christ, but many Churches, many thrones within it, the unity of which is preserved by union with Christ the Head,

⁷ "Eia igitur Græcia Mater Nostra, cui id totum debet quod habet Latina Ecclesia." Oratio ad Trid. Synodum habita Cornelii Episcopi Bitontini. Labbæi Conc. vol. xx. p. 274. Venediis, 1733.

“from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Rome has destroyed this unity by making earth its source instead of heaven, and endeavouring to blind the eyes of the weak by substituting an external polity for the true faith. Rome has not the “*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus Catholicis creditum.*” England has. She has the principle of unity which Rome wants. The Church of England is linked with the Apostles in doctrine and fellowship, declares her faith in their words, and holds fast the word of truth even as they held it. She is enlightened by the beams of the Sun of Righteousness issuing direct from the heavens; and though her light was for a time obscured by the clouds of Romish error hanging over her, she has shone forth again in the fulness of Divine light, and is now, through the providence of God, sending forth her rays over all lands, and will, with God’s blessing, ultimately prevail over the darkness which still covers the earth, but which hangs most heavily upon that Church which has erred, not only in circumstantialia but faith, and has by her assumption stamped upon herself the name of Antichrist⁸. Your Lordship cannot admit the

⁸ “*Ego autem fidenter dico quia quisquis se universalem Sacerdotem vocat vel vocari desideret, in elatione suâ Antichristum præcurrit quia superbiendo se cæteris præponit.*”—Gregor. ad Mauricium Augustum, Ep. 33, t. ii. p. 881.

theory of independent national Churches ; but you cannot deny the fact. Had it not been so, the canon of Scripture itself would not have been perfect, or, as you say, “*one*.” For the Church of Rome did not for three centuries receive the Epistle to the Hebrews into the canon of Scripture. It was restored to her by the agency of the Eastern Church, and now forms part of her canon—a strong proof of the absence of infallibility in the Church of Rome, and the providential order of independent national Churches. You say, “the sun is *one* and the same throughout the universe ; so the preaching of the truth shines every where, and enlightens all men who wish to come to a knowledge of the truth.” You seem, when you quoted this passage, to have overlooked one main feature of this illustration, namely, that though it is the same sun, and there is but one, it does not at all times illumine the different parts of the earth. One country is in darkness while another is enlightened. Rome is in the shades of night, because she does not wish to come to the knowledge of the truth. She shuts out the word of God, which is the light of truth, and has adopted in its place human presumptions. The *Church* is ever in her mouth ; the word of God never. She uses precisely the same argument as the Donatists did *against* the Catholics in the conference at Carthage⁹.

⁹ Labbæus, vol. iii. p. 268. Ven. 1728.—Fortunatianus Episcopus Ecclesiæ Catholicæ : “Catholicam monstramus Ecclesiam de lege, de prophetis, de evangeliis, de psalmis, de omnibus divinis

The Church of Rome is as the corrupted Church of the Jews of old, which cried, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these;" and fancied that they were delivered to commit abominations. Let the Church of Rome submit to the one sun the light of truth, and it will restore unity to a large part of Christendom. It is her arrogance and want of truth which has broken unity.

And now let me speak of the Sacraments. I cannot think that your newly-adopted mother will thank you for your rashness. This kind of language may go down with the ignorant, but it will have little weight with those who do know antiquity. Surely you must have known that there were not seven Sacraments, when the Eastern schism, as you call it, took place; that Peter Lombard, who flourished in the twelfth century, was the first who taught this error. That *you* have not consulted antiquity is clear, otherwise you would not have ventured such an assertion. St. Augustine speaks of the two Sacraments¹. Paschasius does the same². Chrysos-

testimoniis." Donatista Petilianus Episcopus dixit: "Ecclesiam Catholicam penes me esse et pura observatio nostra facit, et vitia vestra et flagitia nostra." See also St. Augustine, contra Donatistas epistola: "Sed utrum ipsi Ecclesiam teneant non nisi de divinarum Scripturarum canonicis libris ostendant."—T. 9. p. 373. C. Ben. Ed.

¹ Sermo de Symbolo ad Cat.

² De Corpore et Sanguine Domini, c. 9. p. 20. Lovann. 1561.

tom the same³. But, what is of still more importance, in the fourth Council of Lateran, the council defines the Catholic Faith⁴. It names the two Sacraments, and then first introduces the doctrine of Transubstantiation; and the council adds, “If after the reception of baptism any one should fall into sin, he can be always restored by true repentance.” And in that very council the Latins complain, that the Greek Church held the Latin in such abhorrence, that she rebaptized the Latins. The rescript of Eugenius the Fourth, is the first *definite* assertion of the seven Sacraments. But the Council of Trent has under an anathema bound the Church of Rome to assert, that they are all instituted by Christ: and though the council has done this, some of the most learned divines of the Church of Rome deny this. Extreme unction, for instance, is said not to be a Sacrament instituted by Christ⁵. But the differences of the Greek Church are so great and so numerous, that it does appear marvellous that you should have touched on this. Did you not know that the orthodox Greek Church makes a great distinction between the divine and special Sacraments; the two ordained by Christ, and the

³ De Sacerdotio, B. 3. c. 5.

⁴ Labbæus, t. 13. p. 929. Ibid. Decret. 4. p. 937.

⁵ Inter Catholicos nonnulli negarunt Sacramentum Extremæ Uctionis fuisse à Christo institutum; ex quo planè sequebatur non esse verum Sacramentum: ita vero sentit Hugo de Sancto Victore, &c.—Suarez in 3 P. Thomæ, Disp. 39, Sec. 2, t. 4.

Sacramentals, which the Church ordained? Did you not know that they do not hold Transubstantiation ; that they administer the communion in both kinds ; that they look on Romanists as heretics who deny the cup to the laity ; that they actually cleanse the altar where a Romish priest has celebrated mass, before they will use their own office ? They deny auricular confession to be a divine precept ; they contend with undiminished ardour against the pretensions of the Church of Rome, though weighed down by the tyranny of Mahomedanism and the intrigues of the Jesuits with the Turks. Your appeal to the Greek Church is really marvellous, when it has for a thousand years borne its testimony *against* Rome⁶. Most of the errors which it does hold, have been forced on it from without, and in portions of it by Rome herself. Nor, should you have been ignorant, that various

⁶ Allow me to refer you to the encyclic letter of the Four Orthodox Eastern Patriarchs ; Anthimus, of Constantinople ; Hierotheus, of Alexandria ; Methodius, of Antioch ; Cyril, of Jerusalem, and their respective Synods, in answer to an address of the present Pope to the Easterns, dated Rome, January 6, 1848. The Eastern Patriarchs lament, “that manifold and monstrous heresies have arisen, which the Catholic Church even from her infancy has been forced to combat with the panoply of God, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God ;” and adds, “of these heresies widely diffused was formerly Arianism, and *now* is the *Papacy*, which, though still flourishing, shall, like the former, pass away and be cast down ; and a great voice from heaven shall cry, It is cut down, Rev. xii. 10.” They look to the *destruction* of the Papacy, as the means of restoring the spirit of unity to the whole Catholic Church. Such is the testimony of the Greek Church against the Papacy.

portions of the Greek Church differ almost as much from one another as from Rome, or England. The Church of England holds the Sacraments as the primitive Church held them, both in number and efficacy, in fulness of spirit and grace⁷. She is not burdened with a heavier yoke than the Jews of old laboured under, but enjoys that liberty wherewith Christ hath made her free, and enjoys those ordinances which Christ Himself ordained. It is not sound argument to judge of the jealousies between the laity and clergy by your Lordship's own experience. It is very possible, that jealousies did arise among your people, if you hinted at the doctrines which you have set forth in your letter. Nor can you judge of the acquaintance of the clergy generally with the spiritual condition of their flocks, by your own knowledge of yours. You may have been utterly ignorant of them, while the clergy around you were intimately acquainted with the thoughts, habits, and religious state of the souls committed to their charge; and knew far more than a yearly confession would have enabled them to do. As to the comparative state of the people under the Romish system, and that of the Church of England, I will leave you to learn from a work lately pub-

⁷ "Unde Sacramentis numero paucissimis, observatione facillimis significatione præstantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit, sicut est baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis et sanguinis ipsius."—*Ad Inquisitiones Januarii*, lib. 1mus, t. 2, p. 124. St. August.

lished by a French person, after his return to Paris, having spent some time in England⁸. But there is not a Roman Catholic country on earth, which will in morality or religion bear comparison with England. If you wish to read the effect of penance and auricular confession, the loss of which you so much deplore, you had better study the Bull of Pius IV., against seductions in confessions, and you will then be a better judge, whether to deplore its loss⁹. I have already shown, that the Church of England does not hold two contrary doctrines upon Holy Baptism; any one who knows the history of the Savoy Conference must be aware that this is an unfounded calumny. She is not responsible for an act of the State. She does not, therefore, connive at heresy.

I now come to one of the most important parts of your letter. You say, "In the service for the Holy Communion, The Church of England denies the real presence of our Lord." And you say a little further on, that you would remark, "that but one of two doctrines can be held upon this article of faith, either a real presence, or a real absence." "The Catholic Church of Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has ever maintained the real

⁸ Un Mois à Londres, par Emile Bouchaud, 1851.

⁹ Inquisitorum hæreticæ pravitatis facultas procedendi contra Sacerdotes, qui mulieres pœnitentes in actu confessionis ad actus inhonestos provocare et allicere tentant.—Bullarium Romanum, vol. ii. p. 48. Bulla edita A.D. 1561. Pius Papa Quartus.

presence ; the Church of England seems to prefer the real absence." It is indeed painful to write upon these subjects ; more painful still to write in such a manner, and most detrimental to a flock, I say it without meaning personal offence, to have had a teacher, who did not know the difference between the *real* and *corporal* presence. It seems almost incredible that a Clergyman of the Church of England, into whose mind any doubts on such a subject should have arisen, should not have consulted, if he was ignorant of the books himself, some one who was competent to direct him, to treatises of our ablest divines, where the subject is actually exhausted ; and that you did not consult for yourself those ancient treatises, which were written when the doctrine of a material presence was first hinted at. If you had done so, you would have found the ancient teaching vindicating the spiritual presence, and rejecting the material. But before I enter upon this part of the subject, you must allow me to call your attention to the very dangerous *infidel* assertion, to which your proposition, if true, would amount. I am sure you said it unconsciously ; that you would repudiate it as sincerely as any one ; and that your own piety, mistaken as I believe it to be, would shrink with horror from the consequences of your own absolute assertion. You say, you "know nothing between a real absence and a real presence." Now, in *your* ideas, a real presence must be material or corporal. If there is nothing between "the

two," you would absolutely exclude Christ from his Church. His promises would be delusive. Nay, more, you would deny God's Omnipresence. If there *can* be nothing between real absence and real presence, in your sense of the word "real," you exclude God from his own world, and Christ from his Church. For God is a Spirit, ubiquitous, *really present*, any where. You make a *material* presence *essential*: you absolutely deny the possibility of any other presence, and in so doing, deny God. I am sure you did not mean this; you neither saw the force of your own argument, nor weighed your own words; because, if you admit God's presence to be real, you *concede* the whole argument. If his *spiritual* presence be a real presence, there *is* something between the two propositions which you have advanced. The Lord's presence in the Holy Sacrament may be real, but spiritual, nay, it may be specially present to the faithful; present with sanctifying influence and saving power to the soul, as his saving virtue was to the woman who touched the hem of the Saviour's garment; and *this* real presence is exactly what the Church of England does hold, and the ancient Church held without dispute for many centuries. First, then, I have to prove that material things are not always those which are called "real;" that the material are the *figures*, and the spiritual are the *real*. You will not, I suppose, reject the testimony of Scripture on such a subject. St. Paul calls heaven the true or real tabernacle, Heb. viii. 2;

and says, Heb. ix. 24, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:" where He makes the material temple, the figure—and the spiritual temple, the real or TRUE one. But further, you might have learned from one of those collects, which you must have often read, the assertion of spiritual reality, as opposed to what was material, or outward in the flesh, "Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit;" nor is this a mere figurative expression used by the Church. It is the solemn enunciation of a divine truth, put forth in earnest prayer, that it may be realized to those who pray. The prayer is founded on St. Paul's words: "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the *spirit*, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of man but of God." There is then a realization of the Saviour's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world;" and that presence was a spiritual presence, not a material or bodily presence, but absolutely promised, *because* the BODILY presence was to be *withdrawn*. "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." There is, then, a real presence which is spiritual.

I have now to show that this spiritual presence is

held by the Church of England, and was held by the early Church; held by the orthodox after the gross doctrine of the material presence was first taught; and is the doctrine distinctly taught in every formulary, article, and service of the Church of England, which touches upon the question; and that your charge, as far as this truth is concerned, was made on grounds not only untenable, but actually untrue. The Catechism teaches it. The catechumen is asked, "What is the outward part, or sign of the Lord's Supper? *A.* Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received. What is the inward part, or thing signified? *A.* The body and blood of Christ, which are *verily* and *indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." You may imagine that this is the language of a Church "three hundred years old;" but you are mistaken. The substance of it was taken from St. Ambrose, and was adduced by Bertram, in favour of the spiritual and real presence, *against* the material presence. His words are as follows; "See in what sense the Doctor saith, that the body of Christ is that food, which the faithful receive in the Church: for, he saith, that living bread, which comes down from heaven, ministers the substance of eternal life. Doth it, as it is *seen*, as it is *corporally* received, chewed with the teeth, as it is swallowed down the throat, and received into the belly, minister the substance of eternal life? In this respect, it only feeds the mortal flesh, it doth

not minister in corruption ; nor can it be truly said, that whosoever eats thereof shall never die. For what the body receives is corruptible, nor can it preserve the body, so that it shall never die. For what is itself subject to corruption cannot give immortality. , Therefore, there is in that bread a life which doth not appear to our bodily eyes, but is seen by those of faith, which also is that living bread which came down from heaven, and concerning which it is truly said, that whosoever eats thereof shall never die, and which is the Lord's body."

Again: "In this mystery of the body and blood of Christ, there is a change made, and wonderfully, because it is divine, ineffable, and indeed incomprehensible. I desire to know of them, who will by no means admit any thing of an *inward secret* virtue, but will judge of the whole matter as it appears to outward sense, in what respect is this change made ; as for *the substance* of the creatures, what they were before consecration the same they remain after it. Bread and wine they were before, and after consecration we see they continue things of the same nature and kind. So that it is changed internally by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost ; and this is the mighty object which FAITH beholds, which feeds the soul and ministers the substance of eternal life."

Again: "How warily and wisely doth he distinguish, speaking of the flesh of Christ, which was

crucified and buried, or in which Christ was crucified and buried. He saith it is the true flesh of Christ. But of that which is taken in the sacrament, he saith, it is therefore truly the *Sacrament* of his flesh, distinguishing the Sacrament of his flesh from his true flesh, inasmuch as he saith, in that true flesh which He took of the Virgin, He was crucified and was buried ; whereas he says the mystery celebrated in the Church is the Sacrament of that true flesh in which He was crucified ; expressly teaching the faithful, that that flesh in which Christ was crucified and buried is not a mystery, but true and natural ; whereas that flesh which contains the similitude of this in a mystery (or mystically represents it), is *not* flesh in kind, but sacramentally. For in its nature it is bread, *sacramentally* it is the true body of Christ.” The whole treatise is directly opposed to the carnal presence, and as strongly indicates the spiritual.

Your Lordship says ; “The Church, in the service for the Holy Communion, denies the real presence of our Lord.” How you could have made such an assertion is, to me, inconceivable. You must surely have read the words, “If with a lively faith we receive that holy Sacrament, then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood, then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, we are *one* with Christ, and Christ with us.” Did you not subscribe to the article which asserts, that, “to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive

the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ." That, "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten after an heavenly and spiritual manner, and the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith." And that "the wicked only, and such as be devoid of a lively faith, do not partake of Christ." Christ's presence is unequivocally asserted to be in the Eucharist, it is as plainly declared to be a spiritual, not a carnal presence. A real *spiritual* presence, not a material presence, as the Romanists falsely assert. Theirs is not a Sacrament at all. Let me recommend to your notice, the learned Bishop Taylor's treatise, "Of the Real Presence and Spiritual of Christ, in the Blessed Sacrament, proved against the Doctrine of Transubstantiation ;" and the whole of Bertram's book on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. You will find in both of these treatises, the one ancient, the other modern, the true doctrine of the Real Presence. You say, the Church of England denies it. Why, even Calvin held it¹; not in the carnal sense of the Romanists, *against* which sense St. Augustine actually quotes Scripture, as illustrating

¹ Pronuntiat ille carnem suam esse animæ meæ cibum, sanguinem esse potum. Talibus alimentis animam illi meam pascentam offero. In sacra sua cœna jubet me sub symbolis panis ac vini corpus ac sanguinem suum sumere, manducare et bibere nihil dubito quin et ipse verè porrigat et ego recipiam.—Calvin. Inst. lib. 4, c. 17, § 32, p. 351.

a figurative interpretation ; and the passage is stronger from not being argumentative, but illustrative².

But further, he argues that things get the names of those which they represent. Thus you may say, the Lord's passion is approaching, or the Lord rose to-day, when He suffered and rose again so many years ago. And he then introduces the doctrine of the sacrament, and explains what the nature of a sacrament is. He says, "If sacraments had not some similitude of those things of which they are sacraments, they would not be sacraments ; from this similitude, therefore, they very frequently receive the name of the things themselves ;" and adduces the Lord's Supper as an instance³, all of which

² Si præceptiva locutio est, aut flagitium, aut facinus vetans, aut utilitatem aut beneficentiam jubens non est figurata. Si autem flagitium aut facinus videtur jubere aut utilitatem aut beneficentiam vetare figurata est, "nisi manducaveritis, inquit, carnem filii hominis, et sanguinem biberitis, non habebitis vitam in vobis." Facinus vel flagitium videtur jubere : figura est ergo præcipiens passioni Dominicæ communicandum, et suaviter atque utiliter recondendum in memoria, quod pro nobis caro ejus crucifixa et vulnerata sit. If transubstantiation had been true, all this is not only false reasoning, but false doctrine.—St. Augustine, t. 3, p. 53, De Doct. Christ.

³ Si enim sacramenta quandam similitudinem earum rerum quarum sacramenta sunt, non haberent ; omnino sacramenta non essent ; ex hac autem similitudine plerumque etiam ipsarum rerum nomina accipiunt. Sicut ergò secundum *quemquam modum* sacramentum corporis Christi, corpus Christi est, sacramentum sanguinis Christi, sanguis Christi est, ita *sacramentum fidei*, FIDES EST.—St. Aug. Ep. 98, t. 2, p. 267.

reasoning would have been false, if the Romish doctrine of a corporal presence had been true. I shall adduce one more ancient evidence: it is a remarkable one. It is where St. Chrysostom argues against the heresy of Apollinaris, and brings his illustration from the nature of the sacrament: "As therefore before the bread is consecrated, we call it bread; but when at the intervention of the priest, Divine grace has sanctified it, it is freed from the name of bread. It is deemed worthy of the name of the Lord's body, although the nature of bread remains in it, and we predicate not two bodies, but one body of the Son⁴." Chrysostom could not have thus written on the subject of which he was then treating, if he had not held the spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and the real and unchanged nature of bread. Had he not done so, reference to that sacrament would not have met the peculiar heresy of Apollinaris. The Romanists not only destroy the nature of a sacrament, but teach what would have been esteemed heresy by the ancient Church. In truth, the doctrine of the Church of Rome, as now held, is not older than the Council of Trent. It is true that the fourth Council of Lateran introduced transubstantiation, but it did not introduce all that has since been added; nor did it set aside the perfection of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice, as has been done in the Council

⁴ Chrysostom, ad Cæsariam Monachum, vol. iii. p. 744. Bened. ed.

of Trent. You must not suppose because I have not entered at large upon the sacrifice of the mass, that I am ignorant of the fearful profanation and gross blasphemy, as well as the extreme absurdity and contradiction of that doctrine. You probably were never taught all that is conveyed in the twenty-second session of the Council of Trent, and the instructions founded on it in the *Catechismus Romanus*. Your instructors were wise; they allowed you to rest upon the thirteenth session, which relates to the sacrament of the eucharist, and did not touch on the twenty-second, which relates to the sacrifice, and is entitled “*De Sacrificio Missæ.*” “Rome was not built in a day.” The human mind would not at once have tolerated the blasphemies. But when you talk of the Catholic (Roman) Church having *ever* maintained the real presence, that is, in *your* sense, corporal, I must refer you to the great Erasmus, who says, “The Church in a synod *late* defined transubstantiation⁵ ;” and really when you talk of *mutilated* sacraments, you must have built largely upon the credulity of your readers. “Mutilated sacraments!!” Did your Lordship never read the Council of Constance, when by a conciliar decree the cup was taken from the laity, and a “mutilated sacrament” made the *law* of the Church of Rome? It was indeed a bold reliance on the

⁵ See Erasmus, vol. vi. ch. 7, ad Corinthios, note, p. 696. Lug. Bat. 1705, where the infallibility of the Pope is also refuted.

ignorance of your late parishioners respecting Romish doctrines, to have touched upon mutilation of sacraments. Your late parishioners have the sacraments as Christ instituted them, in their fulness and integrity. You have a lie in your right hand. A propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, which denies the perfection of the one all-sufficient sacrifice on the cross which perfected for ever them that are sanctified ; and in its eucharistic or sacramental character, you have HALF communion ; and if *your* real presence be a material presence, and the host truly flesh, then is it vain and profitless, for “ the flesh profiteth nothing.”

Your Lordship has made as great a mistake about schism, as you did about the mutilation of the sacraments. The Church of England is not guilty of any schism. She has neither withdrawn herself from the Church Catholic, nor has she introduced new *creeds*. The Church of Rome is guilty of all that she lays to the charge of others. She has assumed a place and power which is not due to her. She established a new code of laws, and made a new rule of faith. She has cut off, by anathemas and bulls, all who will not submit to her government, or avow her heresy. She is the cause of the breaches in Zion, the “ fons et origo malorum.”

The orders of the Church of England are not doubtful, even in the judgment of Roman Catholic writers. Rome denies her *mission*, but that is a different question altogether, and involves not the

validity of our orders, but of Rome's claims to supremacy. Your Lordship says, we have no living voice. I suppose you mean, no infallible living judge of controversy. Fortunately for us we have not; our appeal is to the living Word of God. In this we have greater security than Rome herself. We are sure of *its* infallibility, its perpetuity, its unity. Look at Rome. Three living voices! three supreme heads! at Rome, at Avignon, at Bologna; each anathematizing the other; each claiming the supremacy; each, in his own estimation, and that of his supporters, *THE* infallible living voice. Alas! for infallibility and supremacy. A council deposed them *all*, silenced each "living voice," and the constitution of the Church was saved, as was declared by a Romish bishop, by *cutting off the head*. We are exposed to no such earthly vicissitudes; no such debasing circumstances. Christ is our Living Head, his Spirit our Living Voice. We have no earthly head, as you state; we have not surrendered our highest trusts to the Crown; nor is it the judge of our doctrine; we hold the doctrine of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, committed to us by our fathers; and we fight neither for a worldly policy, nor temporal dominion, nor undue power; but for "the faith once committed to the saints," against Rome's frauds, her usurpations, her persecutions, and her want of truth.

And now, though I have appealed to antiquity to show that Rome has no pretensions to the catholi-

city which she claims, that her doctrines are not apostolical, nor her creed in accordance with that of the primitive Church ; that she has not kept the catholic faith whole and undefiled ; but has a corrupted creed, mutilated sacraments, a head subject to its members, deposed at their will, a living voice, doubtful in its teaching, issuing, like the Delphic oracle of old, a sentence capable of a twofold interpretation ; do not suppose that I rest the claims of the Church of England, or the Church Catholic, of which she is an integral part, to be a true Church upon the teaching of any Catholic doctor, however celebrated, however ancient. No one venerates those holy men more than I do. No one more values their labours, or is more thankful for their noble efforts in the cause of Christian truth. But they are all subordinate to the word of God. I use them as they themselves would use one another. They would disclaim the arrogant pretensions of Rome ; they would appeal to the word of God as the *only* standard to which they would bow, the ultimate reference in every case of doubt. From it they would seek sound doctrine, determine the true Church, and testify against the novelty of error ; by it determine the rule of faith, and show by its light when the first inroads of heresy were made, and thus secure unbroken succession of doctrine as well as proofs of the external organization of the polity of the Church. The ancient writers of the Christian Church guarded it against error by referring to the word of God as

the only test of truth. You refer your late parishioners to the test of 1800 years. I deny the truth of that statement; and think I must have satisfied any candid mind that much that Rome teaches is modern. But grant for argument's sake that it is 1200 years, though in reality the Church of Rome as it now is is not yet 300 years old. What in the opinion of the ancients would that avail? Literally *nothing*. Cyprian says, "Custom without *truth* is the antiquity of error ⁶." He directs us, where truth has failed, to go to the fountain-head, to trace the current to its source, and see what has caused that diversion of the waters of life, or that stoppage which hinders them from flowing down and refreshing the Church of God. The passage contains so exactly the principles of our own Reformation, that I give it at length in a note ⁷.

The writers of the ancient Church were not ever

⁶ "Nec consuetudo quæ apud quosdam obrepserat impedire debet, quo minus veritas prævaleat et vincat. Nam consuetudo sine veritate vetustas erroris est."—Cyprian, Ephes. 74, p. 215. Oxford, 1682.

⁷ "In compendio est autem apud religiosos et simplices mentes et errorem deponere, et invenire atque eruere veritatem. Nam si ad divinæ traditionis caput et originem revertamur, cessat error humanus, et sacramentorum cœlestium ratione perspectâ, quicquid sub caligine ac nube tenebrarum obscurum latebat in lucem veritatis aperitur. Si canalis aquam ducens, qui copiosè prius et largiter profluebat, subito deficiat, nonne ad fontem pergitur, ut illic defectionis ratio noscatur, utrumne arescentibus venis in capite unda siccaverit; an vero integra inde et plena procurrens in medio itinere destiterit; ut si vitio interrupti aut bibuli canalis effectum est, quo minus aqua continua perse-

chargeable with the blasphemy of setting any human writings, however esteemed the author, or exalted in the Church, for one moment in comparison with the sacred Scriptures. "We never ought," says St. Augustine, "to esteem the writings of any man, however catholic and worthy, as we should do the canonical Scriptures. So that we may not always, saving the respect due to such men, disapprove of or reject their writings, if we find that they have thought otherwise than the truth holds it, as understood by ourselves with the Divine assistance, or by others; such am I in the writings of others, such would I wish others in the interpretation of my own ⁸." And when he counsels Vincentius to submit to the word of God, he says, "The Lord saith, not

veranter ac jugiter flueret; refecto et confirmato canali, ad usum atque ad potum civitatis aqua collecta eâdem ubertate atque integritate repræsentetur, qua de fonte proficiscitur. Quod et nunc facere oportet Dei sacerdotes, *præcepta divina* servantes, ut, si in aliquo nutaverit, et vacillaverit veritas; ad originem Dominicam, et Evangelicam, et Apostolicam traditionem revertamur; et inde surgat actus nostri ratio, unde et ordo, et origo surrexit."—*Ibid.*

Again: "Et quod Christus debeat solus audiri, Pater etiam de cœlo contestatur, dicens: Hic est filius meus dilectissimus, in quo bene sensi, ipsum audite. Quare si solus Christus audiendus est, non debemus attendere quid alius ante nos faciendum putaverit, sed quid, qui ante omnes est, Christus prior fecerit. Neque enim hominis consuetudinem sequi oportet, sed Dei veritatem; cum per Isaiam prophetam Deus loquatur et dicat: sine causâ autem colunt me, mandata et doctrinas hominum docentes."—Cyprian, Ep. 63, p. 155.

⁸ Augustin. Epis. 148, t. 2, p. 502. Ed. Ben.

Donatus says, or Rogatus, or Vincentius, or Hilary, or Ambrose, or Augustine, but the Lord saith⁹.” I could multiply passages drawn from the writings of the greatest doctors in the Church for centuries after Augustine, but it is needless. I have quoted enough to show that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith; that the very sources from whence the Church of Rome professes to draw her support teach you so. You are bound as a Romanist to receive the Scriptures according to the unanimous consent of the fathers¹.

And now, let me ask you, What is your canon of Scripture?

If we believe the Council of Trent, the apocryphal books are canonical. If we believe the Council of Laodicea, they are *not* canonical. Nay, more, in the Vulgate, the only authorized Scriptures a Romanist has, you are bound under an *anathema* to receive the Apocrypha as canonical. On the very opposite page to that, wherein is the decree of the Council of Trent concerning the canon of Scripture, is the “Prologus Galeatus” of Jerome, in which he gives the list of the books of the Old Testament as we hold them and as the Jews hold them, and telling us that all the others are to be placed in the Apocrypha. In the New Testament we agree; though, if your theory of the one Church were true, if there had been no

⁹ Epis. 93, t. 2, p. 239.

¹ Nec eam (scripturam) unquam nisi juxta unanimam consensum Patrum accipiam, et interpretabor.—Creed of Pius IV.

particular Churches, there would have been no such canon, for the greater part is addressed to particular Churches, and forms, as the Church itself is formed, one great aggregate by the union of the component parts. But as we agree in the New Testament, let us appeal to that finally to test the truth of your position. The Scripture teaches us that the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ expiated the sins of the whole world, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. The Church of Rome denies this. She not only offers a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, but having so offered, she teaches that without satisfaction some sins are not forgiven. The Scripture says that Christ was once offered, and by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. The Church of Rome offers daily, thus denying the perfection of the sacrifice; and with what delusive hopes does the Church of Rome mock the victims who blindly trust in her! Look at the so-called Sacrament of Extreme Unction, one would have thought, at that solemn hour when man is about to pass into the unseen world, and the soul about to enter into the presence of God, that then, at least, even *Rome* would shrink from the fearful responsibility of making man lean on a broken reed, and trust in lying words that cannot profit. The Church of Rome professes, in that pretended Sacrament, to cleanse from all venial sin². The priest is in-

² The words of administration are: "Per istam sanctam

structed to teach the members of the Church of Rome the salutary effects of this Sacrament. "They are to lay aside all sorrow, and wait with a joyful mind the coming of the Lord, and be prepared willingly to render up that which was committed to them, whensoever it is required; and they are told, that the minds of the faithful are freed from all anxiety, and the soul filled with a pious and holy joy, through the instrumentality of extreme unction³." We might suppose, that to a soul thus prepared, filled with all pious and holy joy, an entrance would be abundantly ministered into God's everlasting kingdom. But the hopes are false, the promises but delusive; before it is purgatory; another process must be entered on, masses said and sacrifices offered for the deliverance of the soul from this place of torment, if torment it be; for what it is, even Rome herself seems to doubt, and some of her most learned writers hesitate to pronounce. Thus, when the truth of God is abandoned, and the sacrifice of Christ is no longer held as the only

unctionem indulgeat tibi Deus quicquid oculorum, sive narium, sive tactus delevisti."

³ *Nihil autem ad mentis tranquillitatem magis conducit, quam si tristitiam abjiciamus, et læto animo Domini adventum expectemus paratique simus depositum nostrum quandocunque illud à nobis repetere voluerit, libentè reddere. Ut igitur hac sollicitudine fidelium mentes liberentur, animusque pio et sancto gaudio repleatur extremæ unctionis sacramentum efficit.—Catechismus Romanus, Pars Secunda. De Sacram. Extremæ unctionis, p. 369.*

ground of hope, and the only means of expiation, all resolves itself into doubt, and the soul rests not in that peace which passeth all understanding, but is harassed by distressing fears, and leaves the world with little to console it as it sinks into death, nothing bright to anticipate. The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world is not the object of Rome's faith, and the hope that maketh not ashamed cannot be hers. Human tradition has superseded the word of God, and the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ is excluded by darkness that may be felt. Again, the Scripture tells us that Christ is Head over all things to his Church, that we walk by faith, not by sight. The Church of Rome has a visible head. The Scripture tells us, that the consecrated element is still bread; the Church of Rome, that it is the natural body of Christ. The Scripture tells us, that there is one Intercessor; the Church of Rome, many. The Scripture, that we must have one object of worship; the Church of Rome, more than one, and, practically, God is less worshipped than the Virgin Mary; more reliance is placed on her than on God in Christ⁴. We are commanded to receive the

⁴ In the "Little Testament of the Holy Virgin," not long since translated from the French, is the following:—

"*Mary*. My child, I bequeath you my *strength*; it will uphold you in your temptations and labours, if you be ready to be sacrificed for God."

Firm conviction that as without Mary you can do nothing, so with her you can do all.

[*"All*

body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper ; the Romanists receive but one element. Here let me ask, did you ever read the treatise, " De defectibus in Celebratione Missarum occurrentibus," prefixed to the Canon of the Mass? You speak of mutilation of Sacraments. You cannot be aware, that no Romanist can by possibility know, whether he has received the Eucharist at all. First, the Sacrament may be invalid, if intention was wanting at the priest's ordination, for with Romanists orders are a sacrament. Supposing the priest validly ordained ; supposing him to have reverence, and intention to consecrate, this will not do. There may be no sacrament. " If the bread be not wheaten ; or if wheaten, there be so much of another kind of grain mixed with it, in such quantity that it is not wheaten ; or if it be otherwise corrupted, there is no sacrament ⁵. What becomes here of Transubstantiation? Wheaten flour yields to the priest's power, and becomes the body of Christ. Barley resists the priest's omnipotence, though he consecrates " in personâ Christi non sua ⁶." Is not this next to blasphemy? But supposing the wheaten flour there, the intention perfect ; if there be eleven hosts, and the priest intends to consecrate but *ten*, there is

" *All-powerful Virgin pray for us.*"

Thus ascribing omnipotence to the Virgin.—The Little Testament of the Holy Virgin, translated from the French by a Catholic (Roman) Clergyman. Dublin : John Coyne. 1832.

⁵ De Defectu Panis 3.

⁶ See Catechismus Romanus. De Missæ Sacrificio.

no sacrament, because he has not determined *which* ten. This is so monstrous that I shall give the original from the preface to the Canon of the Mass⁷." I grieve to think that you have entered a Church (I am thoroughly persuaded, without knowing its tenets), where the carelessness, the irreverence, or want of intention on the part of man, can stop the streams of divine grace, and cut off from the fountain the sustenance and solace of life, which the mercy of God would have had to flow forth abundantly and freely on fallen man. Oh! what a fearful thing it is to think that man's brightest hopes may be blasted, his inward peace utterly destroyed, as he stands at the very mercy seat; and the bow of mercy be withdrawn from the cloud, and nothing but darkness remain, because God's glory and God's goodness is shut out by human presumption. Well did St. Augustine say, "that it were better to be under the legal burden of the Jews than human presumption⁸." Oh! my Lord, these are not light things. By the word of God, you will be tried at the great day; by that word acquitted or condemned. You have not, believe me, studied as you ought the fearful dogmata of the Romish Creed. Would to God any thing I have said would induce

⁷ Si quis habeat coram se undecim Hostias, et intendat consecrare solum decem, non determinans quas decem intendit, in his casibus non consecrat quia requiritur intentio.—De Defectu Intentionis, § 7.

⁸ T. 2, Epist. 55, p. 142. Ed. Bened.

you to reconsider the subject! You have not the excuse, if excuse it be, of having been brought up in the errors of the Romish Church, and having the mind formed in habits of thought which familiarize it with the doctrines and practice of Rome. You have to answer for truth *abandoned*, for the word of God rejected. You have chosen the worser part; you have allowed dissatisfaction at the present state of our Church, and impatience under her trials, to drive you to one, where there is less unity, less certainty, less consistency, than in that which you have left. Let me implore you at least to take council with those who do know Rome, and who are acquainted with her writings.

Search the Scriptures with a mind open to truth, and with prayer for the spirit of truth, and you will find in them, *not* the services used in the time of Thomas Becket, nor the spirit which animated him; but the purity, the simplicity, the truth of the Church of England. You will find a divine Head, eternal, invisible; a body knit together in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of peace; and you will find, that Christ gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the FAITH, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The faith, not of Trent or

of Lateran, but the faith taught by Christ Himself, and his inspired apostles. You will find much more. You will find joy and peace in believing ; peace not contingent on human will, or accidental circumstances, but on the promise of Christ Himself, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

In conclusion, let me assure you, that if I have said any thing in substance or manner which has given pain, it was far from my purpose. I desired to write with all truth, but in the fulness of charity and Christian love,

I remain,

Your Lordship's faithful Servant in Christ,

CATHOLICUS.

London,
June, 1853.

THE END.

1831

1831

LONDON :
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

